AUM

The Universe is the combination of a thousand elements, and yet the expression of a single spirit—a chaos to the sense, a cosmos to the reason.—*Isis Unveiled, Vol. I.*

He, being One, rules over everything, so that the universal germ ripens its nature, diversifies all natures that can be ripened, and determines all qualities —*Svetasvatara-Upanishad, 5th Adh.*

THE PATH.

Vol. III. MAY, 1888. No. 2.

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Where any article, or statement, has the author's name attached, he alone is responsible, and for those which are unsigned, the Editor will be accountable.

The Bhagavad-Gita.

(*Continued from March number.*)

We are still on the second chapter. If my object were merely to skim through the poem, showing where it agreed with, differed from, or reconciled the various systems of philosophy that were followed in India, we could have long ago reached the end of the book. But we are looking at it in one of its aspects—the one most important for all earnest students—the personal interior view that aids us to reach Moksha.[1] From this standpoint we can easily defer a consideration of the philosophical discussion to a later period.

Let us take up some of the instruction given in the portion of the second chapter just finished. The remainder of the lecture is devoted to a reply from Krishna to Arjuna's question as to what is the description, appearance, carriage, and conversation of the man who has attained to steady meditation.

1 Salvation.

Krishna says that "the subject of the three Vedas is the assemblage of the three qualities." These three qualities are *Satwa, Rajah,* and *Tamo,* and are separately treated in a succeeding chapter. Now *Satwa-guna*[1] is a pure, high quality, the opposite of *Tamoguna* which is darkness and indifference. Yet the remarkable advice is here given, "be thou free from these three qualities." It is a very great wonder that this has not been pounced upon before as showing that Krishna directs his follower to renounce the quality of goodness, and thus directly encourages wickedness, but as that is immediately followed by the direction to "repose upon eternal truth," possible critics have been perhaps deterred by the seeming paradox. It is evident at once that a higher sort of *Satwa* is referred to in the words "eternal truth." *Satwa* is the Sanscrit for *truth,* and is not qualified when its place among the three qualities is given, so that, when the disciple frees himself from this ordinary Satwa, he is to take refuge in its eternal counterpart. Further, the instruction is not to *renounce* truth or either of the other two qualities, but to remain freed from the influence or binding force that any sort of quality has upon the human Ego.

It is difficult for a great Being such as Krishna to convey to the inquiring mind these high themes, and so, perforce, language must be used that forever has two meanings,—it continually retreats before us, going from one to the other. "Satwa"—truth—had to be taken to express the highest quality of any being who possesses them, and yet, when we begin to speak of the highest conceivable state in which attributes are absent, we still use the same word, only adding to it *eternal.*

The essence of the instruction given by Krishna is *to become devoted,* as he says, "Therefore give thyself up to devotion." He prepared the way for that by showing, as adverted to in the last article, how erroneous it was to follow even the special ceremonies and texts laid down for the people in the Vedas. Those ceremonies procured either rewards in heaven, or upon the earth during subsequent lives as well as in those in which the ceremonies were performed. We can more easily understand what Krishna meant if we will suppose him to be referring to a doctrine that in those days was precisely similar in its scheme of rewards to the old-fashioned Christian belief that, by following the Scriptures, one secured happiness and prosperity on earth and great bliss forever in heaven with the saints. This is declared by him to be a deluding doctrine. He does not say that the rewards as laid down will not follow the practice, but implies that they will. But as the wheel of rebirth will eternally revolve, drawing us inevitably back to a mortal body, we are continually deluded and never succeed in attaining to God,—that being the goal for us all.

Heaven, whether it be that of the Christian or of the Hindu, is what Buddha

1 Quality of Truth or Purity.

called a thing or state that has a beginning and will have an end. It may, surely, last Æons of time, but it will come to an end, and then the weary task of treading the world—whether this or some other one—has to be recommenced. Hence Krishna said that men were deluded by those flowery sentences proclaiming a means of reaching heaven, than which there was nothing better.

Doubtless there are many students who, believing in the possibility of reaching heaven, say that they are willing to take the risk of what may happen after the enjoyment for such a long period is ended. But those risks would not be taken were they well understood. They are numerous and great. Many of them cannot be stated, because, in order to be understood at all, more must be known of the power of mind and the real meaning of meditation. But the ordinary risks are found in what we may roughly, for the present, call delayed Karma and unspent affinities.

The power of these two has its root in the vast complexity of man's nature. Such is its complexity that a man cannot, as a complete being, ever enjoy heaven or any state short of union with the Divine. Learned theosophists talk of a man's going to Devachan, and of his being here on earth suffering or enjoying Karma, when as a fact only a small part of him is either here or there. When he has lived out his life and gone to Devachan, the vast root of his being stands waiting in the One Life, waiting patiently for him to return and exhaust some more Karma. That is, in any one life the ordinary man only takes up and exhausts what Karma his bodily apparatus permits. Part of the power of Karma is in the "mysterious power of meditation," which exhibits itself according to the particular corporeal body one has assumed. So the man may in this life perform "special ceremonies" and conform to texts and doctrine, attaining thereby the reward of heaven, and still have left over a quantity of that "mysterious power of meditation" unexpended ; and what its complexion is he does not know. Its risk therefore is that it may be very bad, and, when he does return from heaven, his next body may furnish the needed apparatus to bring up to the front this mass of unexpended Karma, and his next compensation might be a sojourn in hell.

In reassuming a body, the "mysterious power" spoken of reaches out to numberless affinities engendered in other lives, and takes hold of all that come in its reach. Other beings once known to the man arrive into incarnation at the same time, and bring into action affinities, attractions, and powers that can only act through them and him. Their influence cannot be calculated. It may be good or bad, and, just as he is swayed by them or as his sway the other being, so will work out the Karma of each. Krishna therefore advises Arjuna to be free from the influence of the quality, so that he may obtain a *complete* release. And that freedom can only be attained, as he says, by means of Devotion.

These effects, divergencies and swaying, are well known to occultists, and, although the idea is very new in the West, it is not unknown in India. This law is both an angel of mercy and a messenger of justice, for, while we have just stated its operation as among the risks, it is also a means whereby nature saves men often from damnation.

Suppose in some life long-past I had a dear friend, or wife, or relative, with whom my intimacy was interior and deep. Death separates us, and in subsequent lives he devotes himself to truth, to wisdom, to the highest in him, while I go on careless of all but pleasure in the present. After many lives we meet again as either friends or acquaintances. At once the old intimacy asserts itself, and my former friend—although maybe neither of us knows it—has a strange power to touch my inward life, and wakes me up to search for truth and my own soul. It is the unexpended affinity, and by its aid nature works my salvation.

Then we should both seek devotion. This devotion is what is inculcated by the Adepts to their Chelas. It involves a mental abnegation not agreeable to our modern mind, but that must be acquired or real progress is impossible. We must by means of this mental devotion to the Divine, which means abnegation of all the rest, dismiss all results of our actions. It is not ours to say what shall be the result of an action ; the Law will bring about a result much better, perhaps, than we had imagined. If the results, if the passing daily circumstances, are not those we expected, then by means of Devotion we accept them as just what the Law intended. But if we fix our desire on accomplishing even a seeming good result, we are bound by that desire, no matter whether our wish is accomplished or not.

This exhortation to devotion is at once the most simple and the most difficult. Some deride it because they want powers and "development;" others because they think it too simple ; but the wise student, even when he cannot at first grasp its meaning, will revolve it in his mind, strive after it, and make it a thing to be attained by him.

WILLIAM BREHON, F. T. S.

(*To be continued.*)

He who in any way reviles, impugns, or abuses the person or fountain from which comes his knowledge, or the impulse that leads him to the acquirement of truth, is unworthy of the name of disciple.

It is one thing to have that knowledge which disciples have, but it is quite another thing to be a disciple. The possession of the first does not infer the second.

THEOSOPHY IN TENNYSON'S "IDYLLS OF THE KING."

[A PAPER READ BEFORE THE MALDEN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.]

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Of all of Tennyson's works, the two in which we find the deepest thought and the broadest scope are "In Memoriam" and the "Idylls of the King". In the former the thoughts, the questionings, the hopes of a strong intellect and warm heart in the presence of a great sorrow are clearly written in beautiful verse; one may read, study, and meditate long on it, for it deals with the profoundest problems of life: but one does not have to look for a second meaning hidden beneath the apparent. Quite different is it with the "Idylls," where the external form is that of a collection of legends from the misty past of Britain, from that period between the times of the Roman and the Saxon of which history tell us nothing. And probably the greater part of the readers of these poems, even among those who admire them, see nothing more than this; overlooking the clear statement of the author in the Epilogue:—

> "this imperfect tale
> New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul,
> Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
> Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
> And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still."

It may be interesting to us to look at this a little more closely; and the first thing we notice is that the Idylls are not so many independent poems, but constitute one organic whole, though written at widely different times.

The idea of a great poem, based on the Arthurian legends, appears to have been a favorite conception of Tennyson at an early date. The fragment "Mort d' Arthur" was published in 1842, but the poet apparently not having received encouragement for the greater work of which this was to be a part, the original plan was forgotten, or at any rate kept back; and four of the idylls appeared in 1859 as separate poems, without indication of belonging to a larger work. But when, in 1870, the four other idylls and the introduction had been given to the public, and the work appeared in the form we now have it, the earlier parts were found to fit perfectly into their places, though these were not at all determined by the order in which they had previously appeared. Only slight verbal alterations had been made in them; but the "Mort d' Arthur" had now the title "The Passing of Arthur," a very significant change; its length was about doubled by the verses

prefixed and added to the original, which remained almost unchanged in the midst. As a counterpart to this, an entirely new "Coming of Arthur" was prefixed to the series; and in these two, the Coming and the Passing, we shall find a great part of the occult and symbolical ideas which we are seeking.

As a general statement of the work, nothing that I can say will be so satisfactory as some quotations from an article which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* at the time of the first publication of the complete work. Though in some of the details we may differ from this writer's interpretation, his appreciation of the great motive is certainly striking.

"Our first impression on reading the Idylls is one of simple and complete external loveliness—of a series of gorgeous landscapes taken exactly from nature—of a glittering and splendid revival of the past—of knightly days and doings set to mellifluous music under the shining skies of chivalry. Soon, however, artistic unities begin to emerge and add the charm of purpose and intention, if only in the sense of aesthetic completeness. We go from the marriage season of *Spring* in the "Coming of Arthur," where the blossom of the May seems to spread its perfume over the whole scene, to the *Early Summer* of the honeysuckle in "Gareth," the quickly following mowing season of "Geraint," and the sudden summer thunder shower of "Vivien"; thence to the "*Full Summer*" of "Elaine," with oriel casement "standing wide for heat;" and later to the sweep of equinoctial storms and broken weather of the "Holy Grail." Then the *Autumn* roses and brambles of "Pelleas," and in the "Last Tournament" the *close of Autumntide* with all its "slowly mellowing avenues," through which we see Sir Tristram riding to his doom. In "Guinevere" the creeping mists of *coming winter* pervade the picture, and in the "Passing of Arthur" we come to the "deep midwinter on the frozen hills," and the end of all, on the year's shortest day,—"that day when the great light of heaven burned at his lowest in the rolling year." The King, who first appears on "the night of the new year," disappears into the dawning light of "the new sun bringing the new year," and thus the whole action of the poem is comprised precisely within the limits of the one principal and ever-recurring cycle of time.

Note also the keeping which exists between the local color in each poem proper to the season, and the dramatic action which is presented in it.

* * * * *

But, by the time we have discovered and followed out such unities as these, we find that the whole series of poems is gradually transforming itself into a moral series and unity, with a significance far greater than any aesthetical one. We come to see, at length, that the high cycle of the *soul* on earth is set before us, as completely by the human actions and passions

of the piece as the cycle of the year by its landscapes and seasons. * * * * * The central figure of the poem appears and reappears, through all the series of events, in a way which irresistibly suggests that more, if not quite clearly what, is meant by his kingship than mere outward kingliness. So that when we are at last plainly told in the Epilogue that he shadows Soul in its war with Sense, a sudden clearance of haze seems to take place, and a sort of diffused and luminous gleaming of which we had been dimly conscious all along "orbs into a perfect star" of meaning.

If now we read the poems by the light of this meaning, we shall find the Soul come first before us as a conqueror in a waste and desert land, groaning under mere brute power. Its history before then is dark with doubt and mystery, and the questions about its origin and authority form the main subject of the introductory poem : "Many, themselves the basest, hold it to be base-born, and rage against its rule."—

> "And since his ways are sweet,
> And theirs are bestial, hold him less than man ;
> And there be those who hold him more than man
> And dream he dropt from heaven." * * *

The inscrutableness of its origin being thus signified, we see next the recognition of its supremacy, and its first act of knighthood the inspiration of the best and bravest near it with a common enthusiasm for Right. The founding of the Order of the Round Table coincides with the solemn crowning of the Soul. Conscience, acknowledged and throned as King, binds at once all the best of human powers together into one brotherhood, and that brotherhood to itself by vows so straight and high,—"That when they rose knighted from kneeling, some were pale as at the passing of a ghost, some flushed, some dazed," etc. At that supreme coronation moment, the Spirit is surrounded and cheered by all the powers and influences which can ever help it; earthly servants and allies, and heavenly powers and tokens; the knights, to signify the strength of the body; Merlin, the intellect; the Lady of the Lake, who stands for the Church and gives the soul its sharpest and most splendid earthly weapon; and, above all, three fair and mystic queens, "tall, with bright, sweet faces," robed in the living colors sacred to Love and Faith and Hope, which flow upon them from the image of our Lord above. These surely stand for those immortal virtues which only will abide "when all that seems shall suffer shock," and leaning upon which alone, the Soul, when all else falls from it, shall go towards the golden gates of the new and brighter morning.

As the first idyll seems to indicate the coming and the recognition of the Soul, so the ensuing ones show how its influence waxes or wanes in the great battle of life. Through all of these we see the body and its passions

gain continually greater sway, till in the end the Spirit's earthly work is thwarted and defeated by the flesh. Its immortality alone remains to it, and, with this, a deathless hope. From the sweet spring breezes of "Gareth" and the story of "Geraint and Enid," where the first gush of poisoning passion bows for a time with base suspicion, yet passes and leaves pure a great and simple heart, we are led through "Merlin and Vivien," where, early in the storm, we see great wit and genius yield; and through "Lancelot and Elaine," where the piteous early death of innocence and hope results from it; to the "Holy Grail," where we see Religion itself, under the stress of it, and despite the earnest efforts of the soul, blown into mere fantastic shapes of superstition. In "Pelleas and Ettare" the storm of corruption culminates, whirling the sweet waters of young love and faith out from their proper channels, sweeping them into mist, and casting them in hail upon the land. Then comes the dismal "autumn-dripping gloom" of the "Last Tournament," with its awful and potentous close; and then in "Guinevere" the final lightning stroke, and all the fabric of the earthly life falls smitten into dust, leaving to the soul a broken heart for company, and a conviction that, if in this world only it had hope, it were of all things most miserable.

Thus ends the "Round Table" and the life-long labor of the Soul.

There remains but the passing of the soul "from the great deep to the great deep," and this is the subject of the closing idyll. Here the "last dim, weird battle," fought out in densest mist, stands for a picture of all human death, and paints its awfulness and confusion. The Soul alone enduring beyond the end wherein all else is swallowed up sees the mist clear at last, and finds those three crowned virtues "abiding" true and fast, and waiting to convey it to its rest. Character, formed and upheld by these, is the immortal outcome of mortal life. They wail with it awhile in sympathy for the failure of its earthly plans; but at the very last of all are heard to change their sorrow into songs of joy, and departing vanish into light. * * * "

Looking now at the individual parts of the poem, what strikes us most in the "Coming of Arthur" is the doubt and obscurity that cover the origin of the King, that is, of the soul. No two can agree as to it, and every man's judgment is a standard for determining his own character. Merlin, hearing all their conjectures, laughs at all, and answers in half mocking words that show the impotence of the intellect to trace the origin of the soul;

> "Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!
> A young man will be wiser by and by;
> An old man's wit may wander ere he die.
>
> Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!
> And truth is this to me, and that to thee;
> And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows;
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows!
From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

But almost immediately after we have again Merlin's word, as Bellicent tells it;

"Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
Tho' men may wound him that he will not die,
But pass, again to come! and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hail him for their king."

The intellect may not comprehend the soul; whence it came and whither it goes are beyond the range of the intellect; but its supremacy must be acknowledged, its immortality asserted, and its certain victory soon or late, if not in this earth life, then sometime when it returns again, over all that is beneath it. This belief that Arthur cannot die, but only pass to come again, is repeated again and again in the poem.

In the idyll "The Holy Grail" is a description of the great hall of the knights at Camelot, where the King held his court, which seems to me very suggestive.

All the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim, rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall;
And in the lowest beasts are slaying man,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern Star,
And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown
And both the wings are made of gold, and flame
At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

Compare with this what the old man says to Gareth of this same city:

"And as thou sayest, it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems,
Saving the King; tho' some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real."

F. S. Collins.

The Tide of Life.

(Annotated by H. P. Blavatsky.)

(*Concluded.*)

—"Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not."

Form exists on an ideal plane, as a purely abstract conception ; into this region, and the similar one of Number, pure mathematics have penetrated.[1] Modern speculations,[2] as well as the ancient cabalists, have asserted that every geometrical form, as well as every number, has a definite, innate relation to some particular entity on the other planes, to some colour or tone, for instance; and there is good reason to believe that this holds true of all the planes, that the entities on each of them are bound to the entities on all the others by certain spiritual relations which run like threads of gold through the different planes, binding them all together in one Divine Unity.[3] From the standpoint of the terrestrial Globe, the first modifications of the last emanation, Primordial Earth, is the mineral kingdom, in which the primal earthy matter is modified by the element of Form. There is every reason to believe that, if any existing mineral or metal could be reduced to the condition of "primordial earth," it could be re-formed into any other mineral or metal. The specialization of the minerals, or "formation of the mineral kingdom," is perhaps marked in the Genesis-Cosmogony by the words,—

"The Elohim called the dry land Earth,"

Name and Form being cognate attributes of a specialized entity. As we have seen the gradual evolution of form in the descent from spirit to matter, so the gradual dissipation of form will be seen in the ascent from matter to

1 It is through the power to see and use these "abstract" forms that the Adept is able to evolve before our eyes any object desired—a miracle to the Christian, a fraud for the materialist. Countless myriads of forms are in that ideal sphere, and matter exists in the astral light, or even in the atmosphere, that has passed through all forms possible for us to conceive of. All that the Adept has to do is to select the "abstract form" desired, then to hold it before him with a force and intensity unknown to the men of this hurried age, while he draws into its boundaries the matter required to make it visible. How easy this to state, how difficult to believe; yet quite true, as many a theosophist very well knows. The oftener this is done with any one form, the easier it becomes. And so it is with nature : her ease of production grows like a habit.—[H. P. B.]

2 "Geometrical Psychology," Miss Louisa Cook.

3 Here is the key so much desired by enterprising—indeed all—students. It is by means of these correllations of color, sound, form, number, and substance—that the trained will of the Initiate rules and uses the denizens of the elemental world. Many theosophists have had slight conscious relations with elementals, but always without their will acting, and, upon trying to make elementals see, hear, or act for them, a total indifference on the part of the nature spirit is all they have got in return. These failures are due to the fact that the elemental cannot understand the thought of the person ; it can only be reached when the exact scale of being to which it belongs is vibrated whether it be that of color, form, sound, or whatever else.—[H. P. B.]

spirit. The crystal, for example, retains its form always unchanged, and the form of the tree is more lasting than that of the bird or animal. The second modification of the Earth element, still from the standpoint of the world, is the vegetable kingdom, in which to form and substance is added molecular motion, or vitality, called in Brahman cosmologies *Jiva*.

This vitality, or capacity for molecular change, corresponds, as we have seen, to the water element; one of the elements, in ascending order of spirituality, being picked up by each of the successive kingdoms of ascending evolution. The formation of the vegetable kingdom is marked in the Genesis cosmogony by the words—

"The earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed, and tree bearing fruit,"

words which point to a perfectly natural evolutionary process under the energizing power of spirit—the physical aspect of which is the "Tendency to Evolution" of the Scientists—,and not that violent and unnatural process termed a "creative act."

We may remark, by the way, that the three divisions of the vegetable kingdom in this cosmogony correspond to three perfectly well defined geological epochs, that of the Cryptogams, of the Phænogams, and of the Fruit-trees, examples of which are respectively ferns, pines, and orange-trees.[1]

These two changes of matter are looked at, as we have said, from the standpoint of the Earth. The cosmogony now pauses, and, in order to make its account of Evolution complete, inserts here the first change of the same element from a different point of view, that of astronomy. This first change is the congregation of the primal nebulous matter into suns and planets, marked by the words—

"The Elohim said, Let there be Lights in the firmament,"

the sun, moon, and stars being subsequently particularised. From our previous views of the Elemental Light we shall be fully prepared to infer that, just as what we call sonant bodies seem not to be real sound-creators, but merely sound-reflectors, so these "Lights in the firmament" may not be real light-creators, but merely light-reflectors; and this view is borne out by the fact that in this cosmogony the formation of Light precedes that of the Light-givers. Leaving the astronomical standpoint, let us consider the next step in upward evolution.

To the shape, substance, and vitality of the plant—drawn respectively from the Elements of Form, Earth, and Water—the animal kingdom adds locomotion, corresponding to Air element, one attribute of which we have seen to be that locomotion, or movement as a whole, which distinguishes the animal from the plant. Thus we see another link of the ascending chain of the elements picked up. The earliest representatives of this king-

1 For further information on this point readers are referred to "The Color-Sense" by Grant Allen.

dom are, as modern science has shewn, the *protozoa*,—water-animalcules. Their formation is correctly placed first in the Genesis cosmogony, marked by the words—

"The Elohim said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature which hath life."

Here we again find words which distinctly mark a perfectly natural process of development. Just as we had the earth "bringing forth grass"—or "sprouting forth sproutage," to translate it more literally,—we now have the waters "bringing forth the moving creature which hath life," as soon as proper cosmic and elemental conditions were presented. If the proper cosmic and elemental conditions could be artificially produced, we have every reason to believe the "tendency of Evolution," or the "Downward pressure of spirit," might again cause the waters to produce the "moving creature which hath life"—the *monera*,—in fact, that what is unscientifically termed "spontaneous generation" might take place. After this follows the formation of fish, birds, and beasts,—the vertebrates or "back boned" creatures; the invertebrates being grouped under the two general heads of the "moving creatures in the water" and the "creeping things upon the earth." In the account of the production of the animal kingdom and of the birds, we have terms used which could only apply to a natural process of development, and not to a "creative act."

"The Elohim said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its nature, cattle, and the beasts of the earth."

The Animal Kingdom adds to the plant the quality of locomotion under the stimulus of the instincts,—which corresponds, as we have seen, to the air-element. A slight consideration of the nature of this locomotion under stimulus will shew that we are justified in assigning this quality, with its distinctive element, to the principle of *Kàma* in certain Eastern classifications.[1] Could this principle—or, rather, the specialised portion of the air-element embodying it—be isolated from the lower elements, we should have a sort of aeriform vehicle, or ethereal body, depending for its form on the attractions specialising it. Of such an isolated air-body we shall speak when we come to treat of the elements.

Three times has the earth *brought forth*,—plants, fishes, animals. But at this point we perceive a change. Evolution so far, from the mineral, through the vegetable, up to the animal, appears as an ascending arc. In this the cosmogony of Genesis agrees with the sacred theories of the East, as well as with the views of modern science. But in Man we find a turning point, at which the ancient cosmogonies agree in branching off from modern science. The sacred theories of the East teach that man is the result of two converging curves of evolution, the one curve ascending

1 Vide "Esoteric Buddhism," chapter on "The constitution of man."

through the vegetable and animal kingdom and marking the evolution of the physical body, while the other curve descends from a superphysical, spiritual race, called by some the "Progenitors" or "*Pitris*," by others the "Planetary Spirits" or "Descending *Dhyan Chohans*." This curve marks the downward evolution of man's spiritual nature, the development of the soul.[1]

As we should expect from the Oriental character and high antiquity of the cosmogony of Genesis,—dating as it does from a time when the "downward evolution of the soul" had not progressed so far as it now has, and when man had not yet lost his spiritual insight—,we find this doctrine of man's divine progenitors clearly visible. In the case of the plants, animals, and marine creatures, we found terms applied which could only be used of a regular, unbroken process. When we reach Man, a new and striking expression is introduced—

"The Elohim created man in their image, in the image of the Elohim created they man."

The pressure of the descending evolution of the Planetary Spirits or Elohim—seeking for objective, physical existence—upon the previously formed animal kingdom, caused the evolution of a fitting physical vehicle from the highest representatives of that kingdom. Hence we get physical man as we know him, descended on the one side from the animal kingdom, and on the other from his divine progenitors, the Planetary Spirits. We have compared this dual evolution to two converging curves. A too great attraction towards the material, physical side of man's nature keeps the modern materialist from seeing more than one of these curves. The modern Scientist is colour-blind to spirit, to him man is merely—

"A quintessence of dust."

But to intuitional minds at the present day, as to our more spiritual ancestors, both curves are visible; besides the physical man they could see the spiritual man

"In action like an angel; in apprehension like a God."

To return to the standpoint from which we viewed the previous kingdoms, we perceive that the introduction of this new factor in evolution corresponds to the addition from above of a new element in the series of ascending

1 There is an important point in the teachings of the Secret Doctrine which has been continually neglected. The above described evolution—the spiritual falling into the physical, or from mineral up to man, takes place only during the 1st of the two subsequent Rounds. At the beginning of the fourth "Round" in the middle of which begins the turning point upward—*i. e.* from the physical up to the spiritual, man is said to appear before anything else on earth, the vegetation which covered the earth belonging to the 3d Round, and being quite etherial, transparent. The first man (Humanity) is Etherial too, for he is but the shadow (*Chhaya*) "in the image" of his progenitors, because he is the "astral body" or image of his *Pitar* (father). This is why in India gods are said to have no shadows. After which and from this primeval race, evolution supplies man with a "coat of skin" from the terrestrial elements and kingdom—mineral, vegetable, and animal. —[H. P. B.]

spirituality. With man is added the Fire-Element, in its aspect of the divine light of reason. It corresponds to *manas* in Eastern systems. Another aspect of *manas*, considered idealistically this time, by virtue of which it "creates for itself an external world of delight,"[1] would correspond to the quality of colour in the fire element. Of the earliest races of men we learn that they were purely frugivorous and perhaps androgyne.

With the formation of man the cosmogony of Genesis closes. We are justified in supposing that, as the union of form with the elements of Earth, Water, Air, and Fire produced the objective Mineral, Vegetable, Animal, and Human kingdoms, so these elements, divorced from Form, should have their appropriate kingdoms of beings, or forms of life, if we can use this term for something so widely different from all ordinary forms of life. These subjective kingdoms of the four elements would correspond to the Rosicrucian conceptions of "primordial earth" and the "Fire, Air, and Water Elementals."

We may go further than this, and, carrying on our inference, postulate for the spiritual ether, and even for the divine Logos, their appropriate qualities of being. To a conception somewhat similar to what the last of these would involve, the Gnostics gave the name of Æons; for the first—the ether-beings—we have the Indian titles of *gandharva*,—celestial musician,—or *Deva*. But having gone thus far, we are driven a step further. We have already seen all the links in the chain of elements in ascending spirituality picked up one by one by the ascending tide of Evolution, up to the elemental fire; let us advance a step, and postulate that the other two emanations or planes—the Ether-Spirit and the Logos—should ultimately be picked up by the Evolutionary tide. With the resumption of the first, instead of a human being we should have a "Spiritual Man," and from a re-union with the Logos we should have a "Divine Man, Perfected and Eternal," or, giving to these conceptions the names already appropriated to them in the East, we should have in the first case a *Mahatma*, in the second a perfect *Buddha*.

It is now time to point out that the pure elements of Ether, Fire, Air, Water, and Earth are not these bodies as we know them. The five classes of objects (corresponding to these five elements) known to us, being all on the physical plane, all belong properly to a single category, and may be called for the sake of distinction the Mundane Elements. To make this clearer, let us suppose that Mundane Earth—the mineral kingdom in its various forms—is composed of five parts of the element earth, while Mundane Water (everything cognized by the sense of taste) is composed of four parts of the element of earth added to one part of the element of water. Similarly the Air-element known to us on the physical plane (corresponding,

1 Vide Sankaracharya's "*Viveka Chudamani*."

as we have seen, to the sense of touch) is composed of four parts of the earth element, with one part of the pure elemental air added; and the Fire and Ether elements as known to our physical or waking consciousness are each composed of four parts—with one part of fire and ether respectively added.

These considerations will prepare us to believe that the real elements are purer and more spiritual than their representatives on the physical plane,[1] and that they will be represented by different compounds on each plane (or as it is called in some works, *planet*) on the water plane (or planet): for instance, what we may for convenience term Undine Earth will be represented by four parts of the Water element and one part of the earth-element; Undine water will be five parts elemental water; while Undine air will be composed of four parts elemental water, added to one part elemental air, and so on.

The composition of the elements as present on each plane or planet may similarly be deduced by observing carefully the principle which governs these combinations. We should warn our readers that these examples are given by way of illustration, and not as representing accurately and numerically the combined elements as they actually occur; they are really formed on a much more complex principle.[2]

In our illustrations we have, for convenience sake, confined ourselves to the five objective elements, though of course it must not be forgotten that the energising spirit runs through the whole series on every plane.

The pure spiritual or elemental ether is the macrocosmic counterpart of that principle of the microcosm termed *Buddhi* by eastern mystics.[3]

The Logos corresponds to *Atma* in the same speçulations.

We have seen that to the four principles—Form or *Linga*, Vitality or *Jiva*, Substance or *Sthula Sarira*, motion under desire or *Kàma*—of the animal, Man has added a fifth,—corresponding to the macrocosmic elemental Fire,—human reason, or *Manas*.

Our speculations as to the two superhuman Kingdoms are also in harmony with these eastern theories; the element of *Buddhi* being added to form the *Mahatma*; and *Atma* completing the *Buddha*, perfected and divine.

The perfect Buddha, though not possessing a physical body, or, indeed, being united to principles on any of the objective planes, will still retain the spiritual counterparts of these principles, corresponding to groups of

1 This is one reason for calling the objective phenomenal world an "illusion." It is an illusion and ever impermanent because the matter of which the objects are composed continually returns to the primordial condition of matter, where it is invisible to mortal eyes. The earth, water, air, and fire that we think we see are respectively only the effects produced on our senses by the primordial matter held in either of the combinations that bring about the vibration properly belonging to those classes: the moment the combination is entirely broken, the phenomena cease and we see the objects no more.—[H. P. B.]

2 Vide Man; Fragments of Forgotten History, p. 13 note.

3 Vide "Esoteric Buddhism."

experiences gained on each plane. It is by these spiritual principles that the *Buddha* is richer than the *Æon*; it is in virtue of them that the *Ascending* excels the *Descending Planetary Spirit*, or *Dhyan Chohan*. These spiritual principles constitute the end and aim of evolution, and justify the cosmic expansion and involution.

The evolutionary tide, in generating the higher kingdoms, has flowed, as we have seen, from the earth-element towards pure Spirit. In obedience to this tendency, man in achieving his apotheosis must, gradually loosing his hold on the world of Matter, add to his treasure in the worlds divine; until humanity becomes ever freer, stronger, and more perfect, and returns at last, refreshed, to his home in the bosom of the perfect God.

CHARLES JOHNSTON, F. T. S.

THE THEOSOPHICAL FIELD.

After more than a dozen years of theosophical activity, the question arises: "Where is the best field for Theosophy?" It is coupled with the admission that Theosophy does not recognize the missionary spirit; it does not believe in what are called "converts" to any great extent. Proclaiming the entire freedom of man, the dignity and sacredness of the human soul, it does not run about attacking the Ideals of others, nor yet thrusting Truth upon the crowd as a huckster bawls his wares. In this Theosophy is pre-eminently well bred; it teaches one to mind his own affairs. In recognition of this liberality the attitude of theosophical workers is that of persons who stand ready at all times to answer or instruct questioners without going out into the highway to drag them in. They know that only those persons are ready for Theosophy who have grown up to it, who have gradually evoluted to it through their inner experience. There is no need to importune such persons; they seek us out.

The Theosophical Society has had, of course, to suffer from the advances of those who want to use it as a stalking horse, or those who think that occultism may for a time afford them a piquante pose; also from that elegant condescension which is the thin enamel to innate vulgarity, worn by persons who imagine that they can confer a service or a prestige upon Universal Truth. This is much as a festoon of attitudinizing monkeys may imagine they lend a lustre to some spreading monarch of the forest. A fond conceit, worthy of our puling civilization, leads these immature individuals to imagine that their money, their touting, or their small names are gifts of price to the Religion of the Ages, and should be gratefully recognized. They may do much for themselves through Theosophy, but for *it* they can do nothing whatever. Universals have their root in Being,

and man can only lift himself to them. He must come to need them; he must feel that the Truth is an imperious, an absolute, necessity in his life, before he is ready to make sacrifices for it. He is inevitably called to sacrifice, in some form or other, as the world uses the word. When the ploughman rends the wild soil; when the pruner uses the hook or the sculptor smites the redundancy of marble into dust as the fair form emerges, they do not use the word sacrifice at all; neither does the theosophist when he endeavors to break the clay mould and find within it the Magnum Opus. Theosophy is blind to all the prizes of the world; it has nothing to offer men but the Truth and a search for the Truth, and they must be well out of the nursery and leading strings before they can participate in either; they must be wholly able to stand alone. In the same way the Theosophical Society welcomes all well-intentioned persons, but, whether consciously or not, every member gains more than he or she gives. They share in the magnetic life of a powerful organization, using the word powerful in the sense of real, essential power. If they do not understand the force and value of this privilege they are out of place in the Society: the more they give in sympathy, harmony, or any kind of encouragement, the higher the blessings they receive.

It was supposed, and perhaps naturally, that the best field for theosophical teachings would be found among the cultured classes. The world was to be convinced of error, and an appeal to the intellect seemed in order. Moreover, their influence and example would react upon classes less favored (apparently) by karmic circumstance, and would induce these to follow the lead of their more educated contemporaries. It seemed to some that the leaven would work best from above downward.

Events have not justified this conclusion. Many persons of the highest intelligence and culture have accepted Theosophy. Some of them are our most valued workers, and he can do the most work who has the most ability to make himself heard by his fellow men. For the worldly plane this holds good incontestably. All that such members have done for Humanity and for themselves cannot be overstated. The heroic and revered Madame Blavatsky stands at their head, but beyond and above our arguments because of her attainments and leadership. Yet the fact that we have found able champions in this class does not controvert that other fact that such members are numerically rare. They are outnumbered by others of their order who content themselves with intellectual appreciation and a watch for flotsam and jetsam in the way of knowledge, ready in a moment to desert.

Theosophy is not a creed, but a new life to be lived, and the question is; "Where shall we find the most persons who are ready to live it?" In the opinion of the writer they are to be found among the working class, so far as the United States is concerned. This belief is based upon radical

differences inherent in these classes themselves. The term "working class" may be used for the purposes of this article, and includes all wage earners, especially artizans, mechanics, clerks, and various employés of both sexes. In itself the term is a misnomer, because in the United States we are nearly all workers.

The very first condition of Theosophical progress is the abandonment of the personality. This includes the ability to discard all our preconceptions and ideals for the Truth, for that stands above all human ideals. While searching for the Truth, "the processes of preparation go silently on till the individual, all unconscious, reaches the moment when the one needed force touches him, and then every prepared constituent falls instantly into place and the being is—as it were—reconstructed at once. Conceptions, relations, aims are revolutionized." Until this moment comes, the individual must possess the power of standing uninfluenced by all external conditions. He must be able to think from and for himself; there must be no attraction for any other aim; he must hold himself fluidic and free.

Apart from educational advantages and a quickened intelligence, the cultured classes have the additional ones of worldly experience, observation, and comparison. But they are like the microscopist who loses the ensemble in the ramification of detail; it is a very transient and small world that they know so well. They eat the fruit, but of the orchard they know less than nothing in their mistaken conceptions of life. They are to some extent cosmopolitan, but only in a surface sense and in limited degree as compared with your occultist, the cosmopolitan *pur sang* who must be equally at home, not only in all lands and spheres, but in all elements. They have reached an infinite perfection of detail; they have an extensive and varied knowledge of effects—such effects as art, science, statecraft, literature, and less noble interests—, but they are too far dazzled by these to think of looking behind them for causes. Their advantages weight them enormously by what the French call "the defects of their qualities." They have so much that they fear to lose! They are bound by the million cobwebs of social prejudice, of public opinion, of their family or personal record. There is nothing so confining as cobwebs. Chains may be broken by native strength, but of cobwebs we are scarcely aware: we think to brush them away, but they cling and obstruct the clear sight. In the very nature of circumstances the position of the cultured man or woman is largely based upon suffrage à la mode. Wealth may command it, but this also traps us with innumerable enticements; the more refined our nature, the more subtle, the more enchanting these pleasures may be made. The intellectual have formed mental habits which they cannot break, or, if they can, they will not. These processes have made them what they are, and they value what they are. They are encrusted with a growth which seems to them precisely the most

desirable in the world. They are the aloe flower of an elaborate although shallow civilization; they have forced themselves with exceeding great care. They have exquisite ideals; their creeds are pure, their code of honor subtle; whether they carry them out or not, there is nothing finer to be found outside of Theosophy. Their personalities are thus their gods; they cannot become self-iconoclasts. They are ready to seek Truth, even, upon accepted lines, but they dare not trust themselves outside of those lines in transgression of that social code by virtue of which they are pre-eminent. They do not see that this pre-eminence is that of a weather cock upon a steeple; their position depends upon prompt subserviency to self-imposed tyrants. It is impossible for them to look at facts in their own light; it is not done; what would people say? You who demand it, you Truth, you are *impractical:* this is the final anathema of the 19th Century, and a great bugbear for conservative souls. If Truth clashes with our present institutions, let us have Truth and build up a better civilization. They demur; no doubt they suspect they would have but little hand in it. The cultured classes are thus prevented by all the tendencies and surroundings of their lives from thinking independently. They have given too many hostages to fortune. Numbers have an intellectual appreciation of Theosophy, but that does not carry one far; they become disheartened for want of personal progress. Like the Prince of fairy tales who climbed the hill of Difficulty for the golden water, they hear the voices of the stones behind them flouting, jeering, calling them back: they falter, turn, and become stones like their predecessors. Others feel an emotional attraction, but heart alone may lead to hysteria quite as well as to sympathy. Their vivid charm, their intelligence, and their virtues are beside the question. They are too preoccupied to have any intuitions of an underlying current of real life. What is needed is interior conviction, freedom, imagination, elasticity, a superb audacity, perfect fearlessness of all results, confidence in one's own soul as the arbiter of destiny, an entire independence, even of one's own mind: we must be swift to seize the floating clues which drift by us in the darkness; we must have a prescience of the unseen. All this the cultured classes cannot have while they lean upon personages and an arbitrary social system like houses of cards. They would ask what Theosophy has to offer in return for so much effort, and when we answer "The Truth," they would reply courteously that they are satisfied as it is. This is not true; they are not satisfied, but they are epicurean; they dread knowing anything less delightful than themselves. I would not be misunderstood, I who feel their peculiar charm so keenly. When from this hotbed arises a nature capable of freeing itself, capable of self reliance, of accepting Truth without counting any cost, that nature makes itself respected everywhere; it is a centre of energy, and Theosophy has a priceless co-adjutor. The combination is rare because the

conditions are unfavorable. We have the statement of Christ for believing that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of an needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God,"—the mystical region which He said is "within us."

With the working classes the case stands otherwise. In the social order they have no traditions, no Molochs they fear to offend. They are not the slaves of their ideals, but with the first dawn of leisure they look about for an ideal, and they test those of other men. They have come into contact with a more brutal phase of error. Materiality has exhibited itself to them in its grossest aspect; they have not seen it sensuously apparelled, or mounted upon a pedestal of Intellectuality with crowds of fame-worshippers at the base. Illusion wears for them a mask of iron instead of an alluring veil. They have been blinded by sorrow rather than joy. They feel an instant need of Truth. She is within their grasp, who can reach so little else. When she comes to them she is welcomed as Deliverer; their love penetrates her meaning better than the unaided intellect does. They have a more eager gratitude, a sleepless desire to pass the benefit along to others. It seems as if this leaven works best from below upward in American life, where the substratum soon works to the surface and manifests then in power.

The working class are untrammelled by the subtleties of modern thought. They may be tricked, but they take no delight in tricking themselves. Like Alexander, they sever Gordian Knots bluntly: they are able to look squarely at a proposition on its own merits without a sidelong glance at Mrs. Grundy. They have no received and duly-approved yard-stick by which they feel bound to measure all things at the risk of the lowered barometer of public opinion. There is not here, as there is in England, an ironclad code of opinions and customs which constitutes the "respectability" of the worker, and which he owes to all the neighbors "in the block." They are moral because they choose to be so, and each feels free to think as he pleases. In fact, next to education they value independence of thought. To them, thinking is a luxury where to the cultured it is often a bore; this because the latter think more tortuously. They are influenced by knowledge; they know that it is power. But they discriminate; they value only that which seems to them to be vital and true; for them there is no fashion in knowledge which changes with the seasons. They are not influenced by the cultured classes, for these are largely recruited every year from their own. They are intensely conscious of their own possibilities. They know that they are the bone and sinews of the country; it has been demonstrated to them by so many of their fellows, now at the head of affairs in all departments, even those of cultured wealth. A future of power is not a far cry to their ambition. While the other class is

occupied in maintaining its consolidation, this one is occupied with becoming, and knows that men raise themselves by independent thought, by qualities fostered within themselves. They yield quickly to the flux of change, and their mental activities remain unstratified. These are conditions eminently favorable to Theosophy.

If Theosophy were a creed with churches, clergy, and charities to support and a prestige to maintain, the patronage of culture per se might be necessary to it. Instead of this, it is, as we said, a life to live. It is the water of life for those who thirst, and for water, not for wine, for strength, not for excitement. It teaches man to look within and beyond himself while relying upon himself: this lesson the worker already comprehends. The greater simplicity of his life is free from the involved complexities, the manifold interests of modern social existence, where these things are forever stifling the natural instincts of men. The majority have an intuitive belief in the reality of the unseen; it arises from the greater impersonality of their life, their identification with popular currents. Many have had occult experiences of various kinds: this will not surprise students who know that such would be far more common if our lives were not passed in a continual whirl of external excitement. The case of Jacob Boehme, the poor shoemaker, illustrates these arguments; indeed it would seem that almost all the great mystics came from the poorer order.

Again, what Theosophy has to offer is more needed by the working class. They feel the inequality of Fortune most; it is they who need that explanation of fate which is found in Karma, that consolation which the law of reaction (or compensation) affords. It is even the poor, the wretched, the sinful who have found the hard side of the professor of religion, found that it is his sense of isolation, of separation, which makes the bread of his charity so bitter. They have found that the gentlest philanthropist of them all does not believe or follow his Christ in this,—he does not recognize the brotherhood of man. They have found that the deed of love alone relieves. Sorrow has taught them many truths unsoftened by a sympathizing circle of friends. Life is better known to them than to those who only look upon it after it has been upholstered and well aired. They have learned concentration, patience, endurance; they have mastered the body in many ways. They have everything to gain by Theosophy and little to lose. They are too sturdy, too ingenious, too argumentative for worn-out creeds to hold them in their exoteric forms: the esoteric might,—but who hopes soon for that apotheosis? The cultured classes make little impression upon American life at large; it is everywhere the worker who rises and holds his own.

Just as we believe that America is the great field for Theosophy because the momentum of progress is so great here, so we believe that

among the laboring classes the largest harvest is to be reaped. I doubt not this holds good in other countries, notwithstanding the weight of the aristocratic classes, because I see everywhere a tendency to Unity, I see the oncoming surge of the People and the working of that Principle which determines the Brotherhood of Man. JASPER NIEMAND, F. T. S.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM.

ELEMENTALS AND ELEMENTARIES.

Student.—"If I understand you, an elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, without moral character or tendencies, but capable of being directed in its movements by human thoughts, which may, consciously or not, give it any form, and to a certain extent intelligence; in its simplest form it is visible as a disturbance in a transparent medium, such as would be produced by 'a glass fish, so transparent as to be invisible, swimming through the air of the room,' and leaving behind him a shimmer, such as hot air makes when rising from a stove. Also, elementals, attracted and vitalized by certain thoughts, may effect a lodgment in the human system (of which they then share the government with the ego), and are very hard to get out."

Sage.—"Correct, in general, except as to their 'effecting a lodgment.' Some classes of elementals, however, have an intelligence of their own and a character, but they are far beyond our comprehension and ought perhaps to have some other name.

"That class which has most to do with us answers the above description. They are centres of force or energy which are acted on by us while thinking and in other bodily motions. We also act on them and give them form by a species of thought which we have no register of. As, one person might shape an elemental so as to seem like an insect, and not be able to tell whether he had thought of such a thing or not. For there is a vast unknown country in each human being which he does not himself understand until he has tried, and then only after many initiations.

"That 'elementals * * may effect a lodgment in the human system, of which they then share the government, and are very hard to get out' is, as a whole, incorrect. It is only in certain cases that any one or more elementals are attracted to and 'find lodgment in the human system.' In such cases special rules apply. We are not considering such cases. The elemental world interpenetrates this, and is therefore eternally present in the human system.

"As it (the elemental world) is automatic and like a photographic

plate, all atoms continually arriving at and departing from the 'human system' are constantly assuming the impression conveyed by the acts and thoughts of that person, and therefore, if he sets up a strong current of thought, he attracts elementals in greater numbers, and they all take on one prevailing tendency or color, so that all new arrivals find a homogeneous color or image which they instantly assume. On the other hand, a man who has many diversities of thought and meditation is not homogeneous, but, so to say, parti-colored, and so the elementals may lodge in that part which is different from the rest and go away in like condition. In the first case it is one mass of elementals similarly vibrating or electrified and colored, and in that sense may be called one elemental, in just the same way that we know one man as Jones, although for years he has been giving off and taking on new atoms of gross matter."

Student.—"If they are attracted and repelled by thoughts, do they move with the velocity of thought, say from here to the planet Neptune?"

Sage.—"They move with the velocity of thought. In their world there is no space or time as we understand those terms. If Neptune be within the astral sphere of this world, then they go there with that velocity, otherwise not; but that 'if' need not be solved now."

Student.—"What determines their movements besides thought,—*e. g.* when they are floating about the room?"

Sage.—"Those other classes of thoughts above referred to; certain exhalations of beings; different rates and ratios of vibration among beings; different changes of magnetism caused by present causes or by the moon and the year; different polarities; changes of sound; changes of influences from other minds at a distance."

Student.—"When so floating, can they be seen by any one, or only by those persons who are clairvoyant?"

Sage.—"Clairvoyance is a poor word. They can be seen by partly clairvoyant people. By all those who can see thus; by more people, perhaps, than are aware of the fact."

Student.—"Can they be photographed, as the rising air from the hot stove can?"

Sage.—"Not to my knowledge yet. It is not impossible, however."

Student.—"Are they the lights, seen floating about a dark séance room by clairvoyant people?"

Sage.—"In the majority of cases those lights are produced by them."

Student.—"Exactly what is their relation to light, that makes it necessary to hold séances in the dark?"

Sage.—"It is not *their* relation to light that makes darkness necessary, but the fact that light causes constant agitation and alteration in the magnetism of the room. All these things can be done just as well in the light of day.

"If I should be able to make clear to you 'exactly what is their relation to light,' then you would know what has long been kept secret, the key to the elemental world. This is kept guarded because it is a dangerous secret. No matter how virtuous you are, you could not—once you knew the secret—prevent the knowledge getting out into the minds of others who would not hesitate to use it for bad purposes."

Student.—"I have noticed that attention often interferes with certain phenomena: thus a pencil will not write when watched, but writes at once when covered; or a mental question cannot be answered till the mind has left it and gone to something else. Why is this?"

Sage.—"This kind of attention creates confusion. In these things we use desire, will, and knowledge. The desire is present, but knowledge is absent. When the desire is well formed and attention withdrawn, the thing is often done; but when our attention is continued we only interrupt, because we possess only half attention. In order to use attention, it must be of that sort which can hold itself to the point of a needle for an indefinite period of time."

Student.—"I have been told that but few people can go to a séance without danger to themselves, either of some spiritual or astral contamination, or of having their vitality depleted for the benefit of the spooks, who suck the vital force out of the circle through the medium, as if the former were a glass of lemonade and the latter a straw. How is this?"

Sage.—"Quite generally this happens. It is called Bhut worship by the Hindus."

Student.—"Why are visitors at a séance often extremely and unaccountably tired next day?"

Sage.—"Among other reasons, because mediums absorb the vitality for the use of the 'spooks,' and often vile vampire elementaries are present."

Student.—"What are some of the dangers at séances?"

Sage.—"The scenes visible—in the Astral—at séances are horrible, inasmuch as these 'spirits'—bhuts—precipitate themselves upon sitters and mediums alike; and as there is no séance without having present some or many bad elementaries—half dead human beings,—there is much vampirising going on. These things fall upon the people like a cloud or a big octopus, and disappear within them as if sucked in by a sponge. That is one reason why it is not well to attend them in general.

"Elementaries are not all bad, but, in a general sense, they are not good. They are shells, no doubt of that. Well, they have much automatic and seemingly intelligent action left if they are those of strongly material people who died attached to the things of life. If of people of an opposite character, they are not so strong. Then there is a class which are really not dead, such as suicides, and sudden deaths, and highly wicked people. They are powerful. Elementals enter into all of them, and thus get a fictitious personality and intelligence wholly the property of the shell. They galvanize the shell into action, and by its means ean see and hear as if beings themselves, like us. The shells are, in this case, just like a sleep-walking human body. They will through habit exhibit the advancement they got while in the flesh. Some people, you know, do not impart to their bodily molecules the habit of their minds to as great extent as others. We thus see why the utterences of these so-called 'spirits' are never ahead of the highest point of progress attained by living human beings, and why they take up the ideas elaborated day-by-day by their votaries. This séance worship is what was called in Old India the worship of the Pretas and Bhuts and Pisachas and Gandharvas.

"I do not think any elementary capable of motive had ever any other than a bad one; the rest are nothing, they have no motive and are only the shades refused passage by Charon."

Student.—"What is the relation between sexual force and phenomena?"

Sage.—"It is at the bottom. This force is vital, creative, and a sort of reservoir. It may be lost by mental action as well as by physical. In fact its finer part is dissipated by mental imaginings, while physical acts only draw off the gross part, that which is the "carrier" (upadhi) for the finer."

Student.—"Why do so many mediums cheat, even when they can produce real phenomena?"

Sage.—"It is the effect of the use of that which in itself is sublimated cheating, which, acting on an irresponsible mind, causes the lower form of cheat, of which the higher is any illusionary form whatever. Besides, a medium is of necessity unbalanced somewhere.

"They deal with these forces for pay, and that is enough to call to them all the wickedness of time. They use the really gross sorts of matter, which causes inflammation in corresponding portions of the moral character, and hence divagations from the path of honesty. It is a great temptation. You do not know, either, what fierceness there is in those who 'have paid' for a sitting and wish 'for the worth of their money.'"

Student.—"When a clairvoyant, as a man did here a year ago, tells me that 'he sees a strong band of spirits about me,' and among them an old man who says he is a certain eminent character, what does he really see? Empty and senseless shells? If so, what brought them there? Or elementals which have got their form from my mind or his?"

Sage.—"Shells, I think, and thoughts, and old astral pictures. If, for instance, you once saw that eminent person and conceived great respect or fear for him, so that his image was graven in your astral sphere in deeper lines than other images, it would be seen for your whole life by seers, who, if untrained,—as they all are here—, could not tell whether it was an image or reality; and then each sight of it is a revivification of the image.

"Besides, not all would see the same thing. Fall down, for instance, and hurt your body, and that will bring up all similar events and old forgotten things before any seer's eye.

"The whole astral world is a mass of illusion; people see into it, and then, through the novelty of the thing and the exclusiveness of the power, they are bewildered into thinking they actually see true things, whereas they have only removed one thin crust of dirt."

Student.—"Accept my thanks for your instruction."

Sage.—"May you reach the terrace of enlightenment."

Literary Notes.

The Desirability of the Revival of the Sanscrit Literature, an Essay by R. Jagannathiah, F. T. S. This little tractate of 11 pages gives most compactly a large number of facts in science, the letters, and arts, proving the advanced position of the early Hindus and its cordial recognition by the greatest authorities in the West. Upon the tongue used, the famous Sir William Jones says this,—"The Sanscrit language is a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." Less for these reasons than because it may resuscitate the old Aryan morality and thus re-establish the Aryan greatness and grandeur, Bro. Jagannathiah urges its revival. We warmly favor Sanscrit learning, and sincerely hope that there may be a continued and glorious revivification of the study of that noble literature.

The Sankhya Karika, from the Sanscrit of Iswara Krishna. The translation is accompanied with a commentary, but the matter is too dry and too technical for service in this longitude. Very different are the mental aptitudes of India, and the Theosophical Society there has no doubt done wisely in providing students with this work. (Tookeram Tatya, Bombay.)

A GUIDE TO THEOSOPHY.—This is one of the many valuable books which our ever-to-be-esteemed Brother, Tookeram Tatya of Bombay, has secured to us through his "Theosophical Publication Fund." It is not a new treatise, but a compilation of letters, articles, facts, from journals, magazines, books, giving in a progressive way an idea of Theosophy, the foundation and Founders of the Theosophical Society, of its aims and prospects and teachings, of the means and steps to self-culture, of what men are and may become. We especially hail the republication of various documents certifying to the character and standing of Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, our honored Chiefs, not that these are needed for those who know, but that they be on hand for the confuting of those who do not know and will not believe. So very much ground is covered by this "Guide," and there is given so much information on many points arising in study but not at the moment capable of answer, that we very warmly counsel the various Branches in America to secure it for their libraries. A note states that, through a blunder of the binder, the Table of Contents has been omitted, and this is most unfortunate. The Preface gives hope that the extended commentary upon "Light on the Path" in *The Theosophist* by Judge Sreenevasa Row of Madras will be brought out before long. Both the Preface and the Introduction are excellently well written, through the former twice speaks of the "basal germ" of truth, a sad mixing of metaphors which will no doubt be corrected in a later edition. The "Guide" can be ordered from M. Tookeram Tatya, 17 Tamarind Lane, Bombay, India, for 2 rupees plus postage.

The March issue of *The Theosophist* is unusually interesting and instructive. The enlivening effect of Col. Olcott's presence in the Editorial office is abundantly shown, and must doubtless assuage his own regret at the postponement of the visit to Japan. A short, but very important, article on "Initiation" is earnestly commended to every practical Theosophist. We have ourselves read it three times, and find each paragraph pregnant with instruction. Col. Olcott's own contributions to this number fill it with life, and we especially thank him for the space given to facts about the American Branches, not for patriotic reasons, but because the late very remarkable out-cropping of Theosophic interest in distant parts of the States justifies the belief that Higher Powers are encouraging the movement they at first instigated. It is certainly note-worthy that *four* new Charters have been issued in little over a month, and that half as many applications were received in the year past as in the eleven previous years of the Society's life.

Through the kind offices of a valued F. T. S. in Wilkesbarre, Pa., the Editor of the *Sunday Morning Leader* of that city opened his columns to a series of letters expository of Theosophy by a member of the Aryan T. S. of New York. These letters, nine in number, were written with special reference to the diffculties and objections felt by readers to whom the topic is new, and also to the need for a compact sketch of the general scheme, free from technical or unusual terms. They have now been reprinted in pamphlet form under the title, "*The Wilkesbarre Letters on Theosophy*,"

and a copy will be mailed to any address upon the remission of 10 cts. in stamps to the PATH office.

"Les Lys Noirs," by Alber Jhouney, is a collection of ornate mystical poems whose name, "Black Lillies," is a symbol of the Kabbala. A tone of profound melancholy prevades the whole book, which is very French in tone; some of the descriptions are beautiful. (Paris, G. Carré.)

A DREAM OF THE GIRONDE, and other poems by Evelyn Pyne has just reached us, and also, by the same author, THE POET IN MAY. We will notice them next month.[1]

MARCH MAGAZINES.

LE LOTUS.—"Fragment of a book in preparation" is an article by S. de Guaita, which heralds his forthcoming book, "The Serpent of Genesis." Starting with the statement that the supernatural does not exist, the author gives some scientific hints on the "Creative Force," even while looking upon God from the anthropomorphic standpoint. Miss Arundale's excellent paper, "What is the Theosophical Society," loses none of its clearness in a clever French translation. Du Prel, in his paper on "The Scientific View of our State after Death," considers the Buddhist conception as purely exoteric, without appearing to remark, as the editor of the *Lotus* justly observes, that *esoteric* Buddhism solves all the problems offered by Du Prel, without his appearing to know it. A mystical and charming poem on Wisdom by Jean Rameau, and selected sentences from St. Martin, together with remarks on topics of the day, close this interesting number of the *Lotus*, which is doing forceful theosophic work in all directions.

THE LOTUS (Paris) for March is at hand and is full of interest.

With much deference we venture to invite the attention of *Lucifer* to the grave etymological objections to its definition of pentacle as a *six*-pointed star.

TEA TABLE TALK.

It is often the common trifles of life which make us think. I incline to the belief that these small things are the most important of all. They are the esoteric, hidden under the gross bulk of diurnal occurrences.

Yesterday I heard a sermon in a barnyard. I came upon the place suddenly and unseen. Two figures leaned upon a crumbling stone wall; figures feminine, by their draperies fluttering in April winds. Jaunty toques of blue and violet, undulating lines, a sheen of golden braids, a crisp toss of curls running, tendril-wise, all over a mutinous head,—what is there in the sum total of trifles such as these to stay the steps of a man? The mere flowing of these garments, or one of the multiform curves of these shapes so different yet so like his own, is like a battery applied to every pulse, even that of the

1 Smith, Elder & Co., (1888). London; price 6 s.

crabbed old bachelor. Not in any mere physical sense, either. Most of all, the thoughtful occultist surveys his responsive nature and asks himself what is the supreme, the final, word of the great mystery of sex.

Strange to say, these girls were not talking. That puzzled and stopped me. One, with the profile of a Psyche of fifteen, was studying a Child's History of England, just as she leaned on that sheltered sunny wall, with pigeons cooing above, the ferment of the compost heap below, and, all around, the clatter of hens and piping cries of "cheep, cheep, cheep-cheep; little chickens going cheap," as if there were some barnyard auction.

The elder girl simply stared down at the compost heap, littered as it was with greenish patches of dry corn fodder, and soft eyed Alderney calves, blinking and munching in their unused, make-believe way. There was meditation in that stare. Even the golden coated greyhound, lying on the wall within the circle of her arms, could not engage her attention by shivers of fright when horns were poked at him and curious cows put out rough tongues towards the hands of the young mistress, still sparkling with a few salt crystals.

The book closed with a snap. Psyche glanced at her neighbor, then took her arm and cuddled up to her. Leaning so together, youth so secure of the sympathy of youth, the whole scene took on a confidential aspect.

One noticed for the first time that all the frisking young things about paired with one another. Psyche's eyes followed the direction of her companion's; her low, sweet voice had a note of surprise in it.

"What *are* you thinking about, Pansy?"

The other pointed to the compost heap. I began to think that in her my ideal was realized. My ideal is a young and charming woman—*dumb*.

"Well then?"

Alas! Pansy spoke.

"It makes me think that there is no Death."

The other shivered a little and cast a scared glance about her. The dawn of spring and one's sixteenth year; surely no time to think of Death. Then she smiled with all the unexpectedness of the feminine nature.

"Awfully nice ideas you do have, any how. I like that. It's a thousand million times nicer than the other way: tell me about it." She rubbed her cheek on Pansy's shoulder, just as the little calves rub up against their mothers.

The other girl touzled the greyhound's ears; under cover of its nervous yelp I sneaked a little nearer that I might hear better.

"It was the corn fodder. Don't you remember how it glistened and shone in the moonlight last summer? Sometimes we stopped our banjoes to listen to the mysterious songs it sang when little breezes ran through it."

"And it seemed to be having some kind of a good time, anyhow. Didn't it now?"

"Yes, but I wonder if it doesn't ever have a better time. I guess the corn, and all the other earth things, the chemicals, you know, have a higher life, a heaven life, somewhere."

"Pansy! You're just too cute for anything. *A heaven life. Where?*"

"In us; in the animal kingdom."

The other laughed and clapped her hands. "You clever thing! I see it! I see it!"

"Yes; don't you now? All the lime, and the salt, and all those things are in the earth and get drawn up into the vegetables and all. Then birds and animals and men eat them there; and we eat the birds and all too. Those chemical molecules, or whatever the books call 'em, they supply our nervous force; from that our thoughts and acts come. The dull clod of the field passes by degrees into the brain of the statesman, and nations are conquered. Isn't that the heaven life of the wheat and the corn? And the part our bodies reject, that goes out into earth again like this," pointing to the compost heap. "See the little flies hatching out of it over there. See that green dot down by Io's hoof. That's a weed sprouting; maybe some bird or insect won't think it's a weed, but food. Don't you remember that awful piece of meat cook threw out, with maggots swarming in it?" (She gasped, gurgled; both gave a shudder, a shriek, clutched each other and turned pale. Then giggles.) "Well, where was I? Oh; that'll be the way our dead bodies split up into a million lives in the grave. Yes. It's so. I guess our soul turns our body out as refuse just like this compost heap. Then more life comes. Everything feels something; everything is eaten up and turned into another kind of life by the world. I don't see any Death about it. I only see change, change, change, and always a higher and a lower life for everything, turn about. First the life of its own kind, and then a share in the larger life of some higher thing. And that higher thing is itself, too, because it forms a part of that something else for the time being."

"And so they're all one?"

"Yes; one great big world exchanging and changing. I don't see so much difference between things; and I don't know why people talk about Death."

"Did you ever think," said her companion, "that when we died, we went to another star, and lived there, and after that to another and another?"

"Why I never knew *you* thought of such things. You didn't get that out of English history."

"Yes; I know everybody thinks I'm silly. So I am. And Auntie would say that's the silliest idea of all. I asked her one day after church—isn't church just too awful, except Easter and the bonnets?—and she told me to be still and not be a heathen like that."

"When you've got a heathen name, too, Psyche!"

"That was Mamma—and she's dead; so I wondered, when I was little and missed her, if we didn't go on from star to star."

"Or maybe come back *here*. Why not? Everything else comes back here; *everything*."

"So it does. Pansy Allan, you're a real, live genius! You ought to write poetry. That's just what it does; it comes back, like the corn in the compost heap."

"And meantime it's had a higher life in some great body. Where? And for us, where? Is it a star or a sphere?"

They gaze up into the electric air. A tender solemnity dignifies the gay young faces. Involuntarily I lift my hat where I stand in the shadow of life. As I move away I hear a peculiar sound, not so often heard by old bachelors. It is a kiss, and gentle words follow it and me.

"You've made me so happy. You've taken away Death; think of it! I'll never be afraid in the dark any more. We go on, from star to star, and we come back to this beautiful world."

"Psyche, I say. Never tell anybody, only the girls. People would laugh at us."

"Of course; what makes them so hateful and stupid?"

"Oh, I guess when they get older they're worn out, poor old things, and they forget."

More giggles, chatter, and I was gone, having learned an astounding fact. *Girls think!* Fancy! Under bangs and the feathered, beribboned caprices of fashion! Who could have supposed it? *They think!* Even *little* girls. For the other day Sue told me a ghost story under solemn oaths of secrecy. In the village where we summer is a so-called haunted house, which has stood empty for years. In the cold days of late autumn, an hour before sunset, Sue and her host of vandals saw the ghost at a window, a human shape that wavered or pulsated a little; it was spectral and faded, like a photographic negative, but distinct in the waning day-light. They saw it several times. They even showed it to me. On the second occasion Sue thus addressed her companions:

"Now, girls, we know the whole crowd sees it. And the house is empty, cause we dared the boys to go through it yesterday an' they did, but with one pistol an' six dogs. So it's a *real* ghost. But of course grown-ups would call us idiots; some would scold us—not my fam'ly, they don't dare. But I just hate to be laughed at. So we must swear never to tell a single grown-up, except Mr. Julius: he's awful foolish about such things; he'll believe us and maybe explanify it."

Sure enough, I am so foolish as to believe with Sue that I saw this astral reflection which becomes visible in certain conditions of the atmosphere at a window where report says a faithless wife, imprisoned and insane, stood through the daylight hours of many years, gazing over towards the churchyard where her murdered lover slept in his grave, as men would say.

The consciousness of a child, more limited as to external perceptions and conditions than ours, discovers often the unseen in those objects or states of which it takes note. Especially is this the case with nervous children, whose earnestness often either hypnotizes the others by exciting their imagination, or, by actually raising their magnetic vibrations, enables them to see also the astral plane. Then the first thing "the crowd" does is to vow the total exclusion of "Grown-ups." The children of the present age are almost all of one mind: they believe that their interests and those of their parents are separate, instead of being identical. They band together to resist them; they afford one another moral support in rebellion and contempt of the mental, ethical, and social dictates of maturity. Their attitude towards all their elders is one of suspicion. It is the most discordant aspect

of American life. Our children do not believe that we have their true interest at heart; they question the validity of our experience; they feel that as a body we are mainly engaged in upholding our own ideas. Why is this? Can it be because we have stunted their true instincts by inocculating them with a perverted modesty, a false estimate of so-called "authority," and futile methods of reasoning from effects alone? Can it be because *we* deny the validity of *their* experience, to them so vivid and strong, by teaching them to disregard the suggestions and hints of their inner selves? Can it be that we have been ignorantly teaching falsehoods to our children and that they are beginning to find us out?

I believe it, as any man must believe who sees that Society is on all sides engaged in repairing decaying erections. It is an organization for the purpose of upholding fictitious theories of all kinds. There is more to be said, of course, on this subject of our children; their irreverence is a reaction from our undue and irrational tenderness, a reaction of the race. This question cannot here be thoroughly explored.

I would add that we are beginning to find ourselves out: the age has misgivings concerning its own nature. Two events of last week were noted by me. One was a lecture by Mr. Perrin, on the Principles of Morality. His is the standpoint of the orthodox, materialistic scientist, and his lecture was an attempt to prove moral principles based upon and arising from the purely natural order. The scientific and moral principles were sound so far as they went, but the lecturer failed to show the existence of any connection between them; all logical links were missing. Still we see with pleasure this hint that science is recognizing her own ethical poverty and feels the pressure of public opinion in this respect. It is a first reaching upward, an effort to broaden her territory: the effort will increase and bear fruit. So with the Church. At the home of an eloquent Protestant clergyman, a lecture on Psychic Research was delivered to a number of cultivated and religious women. That Religion too feels public pressure, and begins to look about for evidences of the soul, to extend her domain from form to reality, is also well. The pressure comes from Theosophy and from the current of thought inaugurated by it. It is the link between Science and Religion because it is both.

Nor is the value of this latter incident in itself invalidated because it was a mere trap to the cultivated audience invited to hear it. The lecturer, none other than the self deceived Hodgson of Psychic Research notoriety, played out in London, having quarrelled with his society and now "Mr. Hodgson of Boston," gives a brace of psychic incidents, and then launches forth into his worn tale of his Adyar adventures and invectives against Madame Blavatsky. That people are tired of it; that he has been "exposed" too; that the affidavits and proofs of Dr. Hartmann's able pamphlet and the signatures of 300 residents of Madras and Adyar all disprove Mr. Hodgson's unsupported testimony; that people laugh at the lack of common sense which came to "investigate" alone and without witnesses, and which listened to the tattle of a discharged servant (oh! these French maids!) until it was bamboozled,—all this has not penetrated the British skull.

The Matthew Arnold spectacles fit more than one Englishman, it seems; our good natured tolerance makes them take us for fools. There have been bewildering women and male victims to their cleverness before now, and the partial youth of our investigator excuses him for having investigated Madame Coulomb instead of her mistress, Madame Blavatsky. No doubt the exchange relieved the tedium of foreign travel. But he is not excusable for playing upon the credulity and evading the expectations of earnest gentlewomen, nor yet for his insular ignorance in supposing that Americans are not well up in the subsequent events of his day. We yawn over dead issues too, and nothing bores us so much as those men who only rise from the common level by standing on the platform of their own mishaps and snubs. We are sorry for Mr. Hodgson's Adyar fever and his London chill, but we heard of them two years ago, and hash is our national *bête noire*. As I said, we are beginning to find ourselves out, our true selves, and it takes all our time and thoughts. The tide of the age is turning. Everywhere I see men and theories reaching outward and upward to broader lines; it is like a springtide whose impulse the very children feel. Well done, Theosophy!

JULIUS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS.

In consequence of an overpowering press of business during and following the late Convention, the answers to the various Questions addressed to Zadok and others are of necessity postponed till another month.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

IN AMERICA

ST. LOUIS.—A charter was issued, March 17th, 1888, to the *Esh Maoûn T. S.* of St. Louis, Mo. Its organization is for the present private.

MICHIGAN.—On April 3d, 1888, a charter was issued to the *Lotus T. S.*, located in Michigan. It is a private society.

DR. FRANZ HARTMANN, F. T. S., has been making a visit to Philadelphia, where he was hospitably entertained by the President of the Krishna Branch. On April 7th he addressed a meeting of the Krishna Brethren, giving an account of his intimacy and his travels with our honored chief, Madame Blavatsky, and responding to the questions of members upon Theosophic doctrine. A similar privilege had been given to the Aryan T. S. of New York on March 27th.

PHILADELPHIA.—Bro. Carl F. Redwitz has resigned the Presidency of the *Krishna T. S.*, Philadelphia, because of his removal to New York, and Bro. Henry B. Foulke has been elected his successor. In the second city of

the Union there should be material for a strong organization, and the PATH, which has copious experience of the liberality of the existing membership, will welcome every item showing its growth and vigor.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—From here we have intimations that a new Branch will very soon be asked for. We have some earnest members there.

IN WILKESBARRE, PA., a Sunday paper has of late opened its columns to theosophical doctrine, and a New York theosophist has contributed nine articles expounding Re-incarnation, Karma, and other interesting subjects. These are now being collected and will soon be reprinted.

THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION

IN CHICAGO, ILLS.

According to notice the Presidents, Delegates, and Councillors of the American Section, Theosophical Society, met in convention at the Sherman House, Chicago, Ills., on April 22d, 1888. We subjoin an excellent report made by the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*. The proceedings in full are being printed, and will make a large pamphlet which will be sent to all theosophists in the U. S. free, and will be sold to all desiring to purchase. It will contain, among other things, an excellent paper by Dr. J. D. Buck of Cincinnati, Ohio.

THEOSOPHICAL THEORIES.

MEETING OF THE FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION OF AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS. ADDRESSES BY SEVERAL PROMINENT BELIEVERS IN OCCULTISM.——A LETTER FROM MME. BLAVATSKY.——DR. ELLIOT COUES ELECTED CHAIRMAN.——LENGTHY AND LEARNED ELUCIDATIONS OF THE ESOTERIC FAITH.

A MEETING OF THE MYSTICS.

Nearly seventy-five disciples of the doctrine of theosophy assembled in the club-room of the Sherman House yesterday to listen to the deliberations and papers read at the first National convention the body has ever held. A delegate from England—from Mme. Blavatsky—was present in the person of Dr. A. Keightley of London, and representatives from many of the States were likewise present.

The morning session was of a purely executive character, and admittance to any save the regular accredited theosophists was denied. A long autograph letter from Mme. Blavatsky was presented by her emissary, Dr. Keightley, wherein the lady spoke with much tenderness of her watchfulness and abiding

faith in the aim to do good to the assembly then gathered, and of her inability to be there "in esse," concluding with an ardent expression of hope that the result would be of lasting good. During the reading of this personal missive—for each one present deemed it a personal letter—there was what one of the ladies afterward expressed as "a wave of unity of love and brotherhood" in the room, and it was plain to be seen that the responsiveness of their inner natures had been touched. A note of congratulation was also read from Mr. Charles Johnston of Dublin, Ireland, a prominent theosophist in the far-away land, in which he spoke of the advance of the movement of universal brotherhood and unity. Dr. Elliott Coues was made chairman of the convention at this preliminary meeting, and almost without exception the officers of the preceding year were re-elected.

AT THE AFTERNOON SESSION,

which was somewhat delayed, the believers were present in good numbers, together with a few of the uninitiated, who, however, did not come to scoff and be hypocritical, but who were interested "intellectually" in the esoteric science. The majority of those present were in the prime of life, and were profound scholars in the mystic lore and subtleties that pertain to theosophy and its scientific attachments. Some few, on the contrary, as yet untutored in the mysteries of the occult, were inclined to be skittish, but were speedily brought to a sense of decorum by their more advanced fellows. About one hundred and fifty were present in all.

In the absence of Dr. Elliott Coues, Dr. Buck was called to the chair by a unanimous vote. The auditing committee's report was read by the assistant secretary, and was immediately followed by the report of the committees to nominate members of the general council. The general council members are: Edward W. Parker, Mrs. M. M. Phelon, Mrs. E. C. Cushman, F. S. Collins, E. D. Hammond, Judge O'Rourke, James Taylor, Louise A. Off, Mrs. H. E. Morey, Mrs. A. N. Savery, Mrs. M. Bangle, S. C. Gould, Alexander Fullerton, W. H. Cornell, Dr. Borglum, W. W. Allen, J. M. Wheeler, Mrs. M. L. Brainard, George M. Sweet, Mrs. K. Westendorf, A. O. Robinson, and others.

Miscellaneous business was then entered upon, and a place of meeting for the next convention fixed. It was decided that the next convention was to be held in Cincinnati, in April, on the Sunday corresponding to that of yesterday, subject, however, to the revision of the executive committee. The Secretary was authorized to print the proceedings in full.

MR. G. M. STEARNS, OF BOSTON,

read a very creditable paper upon the subject of "Our Work." Said he: "The path of wisdom is the path of duty. The disciple performs the action,

and in doing so finds wisdom. Whoever sees in action action, he among men is possessed of spiritual illumination. He is the man of right action, and the doer of all action." Our work, whether as a theosophical society or as a branch, or as individual members of a branch, is in reality one. The beginning of all work is in the soul. However dark the path may be, light is promised; however complex the problem, the solution was at hand. The great life-work of man was to learn to unselfishly strive to help others. Growth and real knowledge lead instinctively to practical effort for others. We learn that we may teach, and teach that we may learn; and such a practical union, wherever formed, is a true theosophical society and doing true theosophical work. The question which faces every theosophical society is: "How may we realize these highest aspirations?" Theosophy can never be learned through matter. There are several ways to prosper in its study. First, hold public meetings and invite conservative talkers there. Colonel Olcott, in India, is holding such meetings and doing such work. In America it does not seem to succeed so well. Why, India has more than five times as many branches as America, and because the work is conducted systematically and wisely, because the movement in India is a National movement,

SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL THOUGHT.

Secondly, publish books and pamphlets, circulate leaflets, for they do more to unify men by making friends than mutual study can do. Thirdly, establish a system of correspondence by various methods. Fourthly, let there be some regular plan of conducting meetings. Fifthly, giving and receiving help and suggestions, for it was Emerson who said: "He who speaks to himself speaks to eternity."

During the reading of the address Dr. Coues entered the room and assumed possession of the chair vacated by Dr. Buck.

DR. BUCK'S PAPER.

Then Dr. Buck was called on to read a paper. He prefaced his remarks by saying that it was a paper he had read some time ago to a mixed assembly of skeptics and followers. In substance he said: Every revelation of truth is a divine revelation in man, and to separate these revelations into groups, to call this a science and that a religion, while it may be very convenient, is not strictly correct. The reality of nature is hardly yet comprehended by any one. The worst of "isms," present or prospective, is that of materialism. The deification of matter is the degradation of man. To materialize is to brutalize, and to brutalize is to destroy. The great bulk of those who formed the advance guard of truth were women; but in this triumphal march toward liberty the weak, the poor, and the degraded have equal share, for the woman, clad with the sun, is a divine mother of all souls, rather than of those alone whose lines have fallen in pleasant places.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN

is a profound mystery, his nature a mystery, and the country to which he inevitably tends the profoundest mystery of all. We only know this says materialism: To-morrow we die; let us eat, drink, and be merry. We need only look around and be honest in our glance to assure ourselves of the truth of this statement. What is the key to the labyrinth? Man; for he is the epitome of all. Both nature and man will tell the story of their being if man will but listen to the wondrous story. But he who prefers to hold fast to ideas already preconceived—what he thinks ought to be—will but retard the general movement of the race. Who built the palaces of Yucatan or the pyramids of Egypt? Who built that other city on which Troy was founded? Why do we refer to those ancient ruins? Simply because we of to-day have imagined in our ignorance that our predecessors were barbarous, and we alone possessed of wisdom. Before people smile at us let them tell us whence the origin of the signs and knowledge of the zodiac. We hear a good deal about man's environment, the survival of the fittest, etc. Consider all the varying conditions of life—food, occupation, the difference in religious and social life—from a material stand-point, and tell us, if you can, how it happens that a semblance of the human still remains. Theosophy interrogates nature, and interrogates one's own soul. Suppose we say that Theosophy is of all philosophies the philosophy, of all religions the religion, of all sciences the science.

WHAT IS RELIGION "PER SE"?

Actually, it is the method by which man discovers his relation to God. It does not have to do with formulated results, but is ever changing. We are, therefore, admonished to get knowledge and wisdom, but withal to get it understandingly.

Wisdom consists of knowing nature. Let man but interrogate nature, and she will fill his soul with anthems and symphonies of knowledge. Yet this is but the nature side of man. There is yet the spiritual; for the consciousness of man ever fluctuates between the natural and spiritual. We thus find man a conditioned soul, to know and understand the natural and the spiritual. Suppose we accept the doctrine of reincarnation—tentatively if you choose. We are here preparing incarnations for the next generation. If this be true, what prevents man from climbing up to God? What, but his lust and ambition and earthly vanities. And thus it is seen that theosophy unfolds a study of evolution, but more advanced than that evolution which ordinary science treats of. But why talk of evolution, and say nothing about involution—polarity, the inward movement from the circumference of the circle. The whole of life is a process of gestation by which man is being created.

JUST ONE LAST PHASE

of the subject. Many persons stolidly regard death. Well, we have so misconceived life, what wonder that we misconceive death. In nature

nothing dies. The change called death is but the rest in Paradise, and when working conscientiously man may climb up to the Mount of Transfiguration and the unfolding of the Divine. He may read his destiny in the living light. The ageing of the body is but the blossoming of the soul. The speaker summed up the ultimate of theosophy in the following poem :[1]

"All love must first be cast aside—
All things that men esteem their own—
And truth be taken as a bride
Who reigns supreme, and reigns alone.
She will not come for lower price ;
Her sweetness man can never know,
Who seeks this virgin to entice,
To share his love with things below.
She does not ask for written creeds,
The faith her lover need profess,
But she demands unselfish deeds,
Nor will be satisfied with less.
Ah! she will gladly give her hand,
And fondly cling to his embrace,
Whose love is passionate and grand
For all the stricken human race.
But lest he should profess a love
Of sentiments that only seem
Sincere intention, he must prove
By making sacrifice supreme.
Then she will slowly lead him on,
By suffering and sharp ordeal,
Until a victory is won,
And he begins to sense the real.
Mainly by suffering he grows
Where his real faculties commence ;
Then he by effort of his own
The painful pilgrimage has trod.
At last he finds himself alone
With nature and with nature's God.
He feels that sanity is won ;
He knows to him God is revealed.
He basks in the creative sun,
By clouds of darkness long concealed ;
He finds he lives, and breathes, and moves
With instinct never known before,
As to his frame his mighty loves
Its long lost faculties restore."

SECRETARY JUDGE

then delivered a veritable sermon on the words "Beware of the Illusions of Matter." He was followed by Dr. Coues, who said :

"Just so far as a man comes to seeing that which is true, just so far back is the source of what he sees. There is no new thing under the sun. A little younger, a little less developed, and therefore a little less true ; for all untruth is but the imperfection of that which in the end is the process of nature come to be perfected in it. Every human being does in his own self epitomize the nature of God, and it is only a question of time until it can reach that temple necessary to reach the height of our existence."

This ended the Convention, so far as the public was concerned, the remainder of the time being taken up in a semi-official way.[1]

The delegates were : Professor Elliott Coues, Washington ; Stanley B. Sexton, Chicago ; Dr. W. P. Phelon, Chicago ; Elliott B. Page, St. Louis ; William Q. Judge, New York ; Dr. J. H. Ohmann-Dumesniel, St. Louis ; Dr. J. D. Buck, Cincinnati ; George M. Stearns, Boston ; F. A. Nims, Muskegon ; Dr. M. J. Gahan, Grand Island, Neb ; W. S. Wing, Omaha, Nebraska ; Dr. J. B. W. La Pierre, Minneapolis ; Dr. A Keightley, London,

1 From *Sympneumata*, by Lawrence Oliphant.

England, and others. Proxies were held by delegates for branches in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Malden, Mass., Philadelphia, and other places.

Another meeting was held at the home of Stanley B. Sexton on the 23d. On the evening of 22d William Q. Judge delivered an address to the Spiritualists at Martine's Hall. Dr. Coues delivered an address on the 26th before the Western Society for Psychical Research. The whole affair was full of encouragement. Loyalty to the cause, to the Masters, and to Mme. H. P. Blavatsky was felt and declared by all.

"The Gates of Gold."

"When the strong man has crossed the threshold he speaks no more to those at the other (this) side. And even the words he utters when he is outside are so full of mystery, so veiled and profound, that only those who follow in his steps can see the light within them."—*Through the Gates of Gold*, p. 19.

He fails to speak *when* he has crossed, because, if he did, they would neither hear nor understand him. All the language he can use when on this side is language based upon experience gained outside the Gates, and when he uses that language, it calls up in the minds of his hearers only the ideas corresponding to the plane they are on and experience they have undergone; for if he speaks of that kind of idea and experience which he has found on the other side, his hearers do not know what is beneath his words, and therefore his utterances seem profound. They are not veiled and profound because he wishes to be a mystic whose words no one can expound, but solely because of the necessities of the case. He is willing and anxious to tell all who wish to know, but cannot convey what he desires, and he is sometimes accused of being unnecessarily vague and misleading.

But there *are* some who pretend to have passed through these Gates and who utter mere nothings, mere juggles of words that cannot be understood because there is nothing behind them rooted in experience. Then the question arises, "How are we to distinguish between these two?"

There are two ways.

1. By having an immense erudition, a profound knowledge of the various and numberless utterances of those known Masters throughout the ages whose words are full of power. But this is obviously an immense and difficult task, one which involves years devoted to reading and a rarely-found retentiveness of memory. So it cannot be the one most useful to us. It is the path of mere book-knowledge.

2. The other mode is by testing those utterances by our intuition. There is scarcely any one who has not got an internal voice —a silent monitor— who, so to say, strikes within us the bell that corresponds to truth,

just as a piano's wires each report the vibrations peculiar to it, but not due to striking the wire itself. It is just as if we had within us a series of wires whose vibrations are all true, but which will not be vibrated except by those words and propositions which are in themselves true. So that false and pretending individual who speaks in veiled lauguage only mere nothingness will never vibrate within us those wires which correspond to truth. But when one who has been to and through those Gates speaks ordinary words really veiling grand ideas, then all the invisible wires within immediately vibrate in unison. The inner monitor has struck them, and we feel that he has said what is true, and whether we understand him or not we feel the power of the vibration and the value of the words we have heard.

Many persons are inclined to doubt the existence in themselves of this intuition, who in fact possess it. It is a common heritage of man, and only needs unselfish effort to develop it. Many selfish men have it in their selfish lives; many a great financier and manager has it and exercises it. This is merely its lowest use and expression.

By constantly referring mentally all propositions to it and thus giving it an opportunity for growth, it will grow and speak soon with no uncertain tones. This is what is meant in old Hindu books by the expression, "a knowledge of the real meaning of sacred books." It ought to be cultivated because it is one of the first steps in knowing ourselves and understanding others.

In this civilization especially we are inclined to look outside instead of inside ourselves. Nearly all our progress is material and thus superficial. Spirit is neglected or forgotten, while that which is not spirit is enshrined as such. The intuitions of the little child are stifled until at last they are almost lost, leaving the many at the mercy of judgments based upon exterior reason. How, then, can one who has been near the Golden Gates—much more he who passed through them—be other than silent in surroundings where the golden refulgence is unknown or denied. Obliged to use the words of his fellow travellers, he gives them a meaning unknown to them, or detaches them from their accustomed relation. Hence he is sometimes vague, often misleading, seldom properly understood. But not lost are any of these words, for they sound through the ages, and in future eras they will turn themselves into sentences of gold in the hearts of disciples yet to come.

MOULVIE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Since complaints have reached us about the non-delivery of the PATH in foreign countries, we wish to state that we are not responsible for its delivery except to those ordering from us either directly or through our agent, the Theosophical Publication Society, 78 Clarendon Road, Notting Hill, London, England. The price for England, post-free, is 8 shillings.

The living soul is not woman, nor man, nor neuter; whatever body it takes, with that it is joined only. —*Ssvetasvatara-Upanishad.*

OM.

---

1 NOTE.—This meeting was devoted to initiation and other matters.